

# Californ Place Names

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## CALIFORNIA PLACE NAMES

1880, p. 201).

**Clough Cave** [Tulare]. "So named in honor of William O. Clough (1851-1917), who discovered this cave in 1885" (Geographic Board, *Sixth Report*).

**Clough: Creek, Gulch** [Shasta]. Named for Noah Clough, who settled at the creek in the 1850's (Steger).

**Clover.** A favorite name in regions where this fodder grows. There are about ten places in the State so named, including a Red Clover Valley [Plumas] and a settlement, Clover Flat [San Diego]. **Cloverdale** [Sonoma]. The post office was established August 15, 1857. Previously, the settlement had been known as Markleville, for R. B. Markle, former owner of the land.

**Clovis** [Fresno]. The Southern Pacific named its station for Clovis Cole, owner of the large wheat ranch through which it built a branch line in 1889.

**Clyde** [Contra Costa]. The name originated during World War I, when the Clyde Shipyard was located here (J. Silvas).

**Coachella, kô-chêl'-â: Valley, town** [Riverside]. The name of the valley between the San Bernardino County line and Salton Sea was known until about 1900 as Cahuilla Valley because it was within the habitat of the Kawea or Cahuilla Indians. In 1901 the section north of Palin Springs appears on the atlas sheet of the San Jacinto quadrangle as Coachella Valley. The post office was established November 30, 1901. No evidence of the early use of the name could be found, but a number of etymologies have been advanced. Since shells could be found in the valley, obviously remnants of the time when the region of Riverside and Imperial counties was under water, Dr. Stephen Bowers in a lecture before the Ventura Society of Natural History in 1888 called it *Conchilla* Valley, after the Spanish *conchilla*, 'shell.' According to Elmo Proctor in *Desert Magazine*, November, 1945, the valley was generally called Salton Sea Sink and when the region was surveyed by the Geological Survey before 1900, A. G. Tingman, a storekeeper in Indio, proposed the change of the name to *Conchilla* Valley. This name was accepted by the prospectors and homesteaders, and apparently also by W. C. Mendenhall of the Geological Survey. At any rate, he used the name *Conchilla* as late as 1909 (WSP, No. 225). But the cartographers apparently misread the name and it appeared as Coachella Valley on the San Jacinto atlas

sheet—a "bastard name without meaning in any language," as Mr. Tingman is reported to have remarked. But other inhabitants of the valley considered the name "unique, distinctive and euphonious," and in 1909 the the Geographic Board made the name official.

**Coal.** The Coal Creeks and Coalmine Canyons in various counties are reminiscent of the many "coal booms," which were widely publicized and heavily financed but always failed to produce valuable coal. The hope of discovering coal in California was foremost in the minds of industrial and mining circles from the American occupation until the large-scale exploitation of oil deposits. A land grant in Santa Cruz County, dated February 3, 1838, was called La Carbonera, but this name probably referred to a place where charcoal was made, not to a coal mine. There is a Charcoal Ravine in Sierra County.

**Coalinga, kô-ling'-gâ** [Fresno]. The place was known as Coaling Station after the Southern Pacific had built a branch line to the district in 1888, when deposits of lignite were widely publicized as great coal seams. According to local tradition, the sonorous name was created by an official of the Southern Pacific who added an "a" to "coaling" (Laura Lauritzen). Coalmine Canyon northeast of the town also recalls the "Coalinga coal boom," which peetered out like the other California coal booms and in later years was replaced in this district by a more substantial oil boom.

**Coarsegold** [Madera]. The name was given in 1849 by Texan miners, probably because they found coarse gold nuggets in the placer.

**Coast Range.** The name was used spontaneously by early American explorers and cartographers as a collective term for the various *sierras* along the coast, some of which had previously borne the names of saints. Coast Ranges is now loosely though officially applied to the entire group of mountains from Mexico to Canada. In the singular it is commonly restricted to the coastal mountains of central California.

**Cobb: Valley, Creek, Mountain, town** [Lake]. Named for John Cobb, a native of Kentucky, who built a combined sawmill and gristmill in the valley in 1859. Cobb Mountain is on the von Leicht-Craven map of 1874.

**Coches.** The Mexican provincial word for 'hogs' was repeatedly used for geographical terms and was applied to a number of land grants and claims. **Coches, kô'-chê's: Creek, Canyon** [San Diego]. Cañada de los Coches